



## TIP OF THE SPEAR

### YUMA GETS FIRST F-35 SQUADRON



The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing welcomed its first F-35B squadron Nov. 20 during an official ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz. During the ceremony, Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121, formerly an F/A-18 Hornet squadron, re-designated as the Corps' first operational F-35 squadron, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121. The arrival of the F-35B Lightning II, also known as the Joint Strike Fighter, to Yuma signifies the Marine Corps' forward progress in transitioning the F-35 from a testing and training aircraft to a fully operational tactical aviation capability. "Today marks the beginning of

Joint Strike Fighters flying over the skies of Arizona for perhaps the next 50 years," said Arizona Sen. John McCain during the ceremony. "That's another 50 years for the city of Yuma, and the state of Arizona to do their part to help ensure this great nation remains strong and secure." [Read more](#)

**Also Read: Military Welcomes F-35 Operational Squadron**

**Also Read: Marines Establish First Squad of F-35 fighters**



## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Recruits from Kilo Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, remove their M50 Joint Service General Purpose Mask to expose themselves to CS gas, a non-lethal, riot control agent, at the Confidence Chamber aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. The purpose of this exercise is to let recruits experience the effects of the gas and allows them to gain confidence in their ability to properly clear the mask. *(Photo by Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane)*





## IN THE NEWS

### Q&A WITH THE CMC ON THE FUTURE OF THE CORPS



Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), recently spoke on the current state of the Corps as it faces impending budget cuts and shifts focus away from Afghanistan. On the home front, the CMC is anticipating nearly every area of the Corps could be impacted by the sequestration, and he is working hard to figure out what is "good enough" to get troops through the next few years. Overseas, there is a general feeling of confidence in the Afghan National Army to take control in Afghanistan as the Marines withdraw. In addition, the Corps is focusing on expanding its opportunities for women and minorities, as well as reducing

the rates of suicide and sexual assault. [Read more](#)

### MIDDLE EAST UNREST EXTENDS 24TH MEU DEPLOYMENT



More than 4,000 Marines and Sailors of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) currently deployed to the Mediterranean were ordered to remain in the region until further direction Nov. 19 as events in the Middle East continue to unfold. The announcement came just weeks before the 24th MEU, embarked on the three-ship Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), was expected to arrive home from its eight-month deployment. "There are no specific plans for the 24th MEU or Iwo ARG to be employed, but their continued presence in the region is a prudent measure to allow the Navy/Marine Corps team to respond to any crisis or contingency, if

directed," according to an official release. [Read more](#)

[24th MEU's Facebook Page](#)

## FOUR-STAR TAKES CHARGE AT SOUTHCOM



Marine Gen. John F. Kelly pinned on his fourth star and took command of the Southern Command near Miami Nov. 19, replacing Air Force Gen. Douglas Fraser. With more than four decades of service in the Corps, Kelly most recently served as Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's senior military advisor, and previously commanded troops in Iraq. "There are few you'd like to share a foxhole with, and John Kelly is one of those," said Panetta. In his first public appearance as commander, Kelly praised the ongoing peace talks between Colombia and rebels as an alternative to warfare. [Read more](#)

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## MARSOC CONTINUES TO GROW DESPITE DRAWDOWN



Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) plans to continue growth in the coming years, despite the Corps' plan to cut 20,000 active-duty Marines over the next four years. MARSOC expects to grow by 35 percent, giving the base 844 critical skills operators, 48 teams and 12 companies by 2016. Three battalions of support personnel will also be added, with approximately 1,800 Marines slated to fill those units. "This (growth) was planned long before the drawdown, and I think that's a key point," said Maj. Gen. Mark Clark, MARSOC Commanding General. "We're not all of a sudden deciding 'Hey we're going to grow MARSOC.' This had been a planned growth from a few years ago and it just so happens that we're still continuing that (growth) as the rest of the Department of Defense is drawing down." [Read more](#)

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## RETIRED GENERAL TO LEAD CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



Retired Maj. Gen. Anthony Jackson was sworn in as Director of California's State Parks Nov. 16, bringing his experience as a commanding general and advocate for environmental issues to an organization suffering from financial challenges and administrative mismanagement. Jackson, a resident of San Diego, Calif., retired last year after a 36-year career in the Corps, most recently serving as commanding general for Marine Corps Installations Command- West.

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"He's a tough man for a tough job," said Gov. Jerry Brown, who nominated Jackson for the role. [Read more](#)

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## MICHIGAN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS TO BE MEMORIALIZED



The East Lansing Rotary Club in Michigan is creating a monument to honor local Medal of Honor recipient Marine 2nd Lt. Sherrod E. Skinner, Jr. While serving with the 11th Marines, 1st Marine Division in Korea in 1952, Skinner was killed in action when he threw himself onto a grenade to protect his fellow Marines. The monument will be made from polished black granite, similar to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C., with rectangular columns depicting two wings to provide information about Skinner, the Corps and the Medal of Honor. A similar memorial is planned in Eaton County, Mich., to honor two other local Medal of Honor recipients,

Navy Ensign Francis Flaherty during the Pearl Harbor attack at the start of World War II and Marine Sgt. Michael Hudson during the Civil War. [Read more](#)

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## HIRING OUR HEROES JOB FAIR



A "Hiring Our Heroes" job fair will be held Dec. 5 at Nationals Park in Washington, D.C. In conjunction with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Hiring Our Heroes program helps service members and their spouses transition from military life to the civilian workforce. The event is open to veterans, active duty service members, and Guard and Reserve members, as well as military spouses. Spouses can also attend a series of career-building presentations through the Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Business Alliance. The event is free for job-seekers and participating employers. [Read more](#)

[Hiring Our Heroes Website](#)

[Also Read: New Tools to Help Vets Find Jobs](#)

## WOUNDED MARINES RECOVER THROUGH FISHING



From the bustling streets of Afghanistan and Iraq to the still waters across North America, wounded warriors are turning to fly-fishing to further their recovery process. The Warriors and Quiet Waters Foundation, started by Col. (ret.) Eric Hastings, provides traumatically injured servicemen with a restorative program of fly-fishing in serene surroundings as a healing therapy. Participants are given the opportunity to compete in fishing competitions and go on fishing trips around the nation. "It's a great experience," said Gunnery Sgt. Brian Meyer, who has participated in several fishing trips through the program since he was wounded last year.

"My job now is basically to recover." [Read more](#)

**Also Read: 'Smart' House Gives War Vet More Independence**

**Also Read: Music Lessons May Help Brain-Injured Veterans**

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## USO SALUTES MILITARY CHEFS' CULINARY CREATIVITY



The Defense Department, in conjunction with the United Service Organizations (USO) of Metropolitan Washington, recognized 10 military chefs during the 2012 Salute to Military Chefs Nov. 14. Throughout the evening, the chefs and aides showcased their talents, preparing a seven-course meal featuring a main entre of smoked duck breast, pumpkin risotto, braised kale and port-blackberry sauce. By the end of the evening, Marine Master Sgt. Brian Brazil was named the enlisted aide of the year -- beating out several others, including fellow Marine Gunnery Sgt. Pedro Marrerocruz, who was nominated by the Commandant of the Marine

Corps. [Read more](#)



# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

## NOVEMBER 27, 1950

The Battle of Chosin Reservoir began when eight Chinese Communist divisions in Korea launched a massive attack with the purpose of destroying the 1st Marine Division. Encircled by enemy forces, Maj. Gen. Oliver P. Smith made his immortal battle cry, "Retreat, hell! We're just attacking in a different direction!"



## SEMPER FI

### MARINE DONATES BONE MARROW FOR STRANGER



Going above and beyond the call of duty, Lance Cpl. Enrique Gallardo donated his peripheral blood stem cell to a 23-year-old woman diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a fast-growing cancer in which immature white blood cells overcrowd the bone marrow. Gallardo underwent a five-day series of shots designed to expand his bone marrow to assist with its withdrawal -- a notoriously painful process. "I have always lived by the idea that if you can help out someone in need, you should," he said. "If the temporary pain I (had) to endure during the process could prevent someone from a lifetime of pain, it was worth it." The Marine, who

currently serves as aviation systems radio technician at Camp Foster, Japan, is now eagerly awaiting an update on the patient, the identity of whom won't be revealed to him until a year after the donation.

[Read more](#)



## OUR MISSION

*In the words of Lt. Gen. Victor H. "Brute" Krulak, "The United States does not need a Marine Corps... the United States wants a Marine Corps." As America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, the Marine Corps is deployed across the globe, standing ready to respond to any crisis. The Marine Corps Connection is your one-stop source for the latest Marine Corps news and is published weekly by the Division of Public Affairs at Headquarters Marine Corps. **Stay connected to your Marines!***



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